



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

MASWCD MINUTES Regular Meeting USDA Service Center Jefferson City, Missouri November 27, 2011

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Present

Steve Radcliff, President
Bruce Biermann, Area I
Tom Lambert, Area II
Kenny Lovelace, Area III
Beverly Dometrorch, Area IV
George Engelbach, Area V
Ben Gorden, Area VI
Dan Greeson, Area VII
Mike Kelley, Area VIII
David Dix, Treasurer
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

J. R. Flores, NRCS
Kathryn Braden, Soil & Water Commission
Colleen Meredith, DNR Soil & Water
Bill Wilson, DNR Soil & Water
Sandy Hutchison, Employees Assn. Pres.
David Morris, Area II Alternate (Livingston)
Richard Hoelscher, Area V Alt (St Louis)
Steve Huber, Area VIII Alternate (Perry)
Henry Heinze, Clark SWCD
John Rice, Grundy SWCD
Charlie Perkins, Employees Assn. Board

Not Present

Fred Feldmann, Past President

President Steve Radcliff welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Introductions were made around the room. Quorum established by roll call. No revisions to the agenda.

The minutes from the September 13, 2011 meeting were approved as printed and presented. Motion for approval made by Beverly Dometrorch, Tom Lambert seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

A treasurer report was given by David Dix. He stated that 99 districts have paid dues in full for this year; he read the names of those who have not paid so Area Directors would know who is not eligible to vote at the Business Meeting. Bruce Biermann motioned to approve the treasurer report. Mike Kelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

MDC Report: Clint Dalbom was not able to attend so there was no MDC report.

NRCS Report: J. R. Flores distributed copies of the NRCS annual report. He stated he appreciated all the cards, etc., he received while in the hospital and that it was good to be back to work. He said they are still waiting to see what kind of budget they will have this year. He reviewed the number of contracts and the funding for the federal programs they handled the past year. He stated the offices have been extremely busy. He was asked if there was any worry about office closings or employee cutbacks in light of the current economy and budget talks. He said he had received no word on any of that yet, but it is budget dependent. Some RC&D councils are still functioning after the RC&D offices were closed, because they still had a couple of years to go on some projects. He stated that NRCS still plans to partner with RC&D and hopes the funding for the program will return. In response to a question about completion of work for 2012 EQIP contracts, he stated that the work should already be done because there has to be 1 year of operation and maintenance. If the work is not completed, the contracts may need to be extended.

Commission Report: Colleen Meredith stated the Commission meeting is scheduled for the next day; there are quite a few items of interest on the agenda – disaster relief, several appeals and requests, and updates on some watersheds. She stated that last year was the third highest year for claimed cost-share funds, that it actually went over the \$24 million which was appropriated. Through October this year is up almost 6% from last year for cost-share payments. Kathryn Braden re-emphasized interest to attend the Commission meeting.

Employee Association Report: Sandy Hutchison reported they are celebrating their 25th year anniversary as an Employees Association. All members will be getting a tumbler. Currently over 90% of the employees are members. One area is 100% paid (Area 5). They did have fall training sessions in all areas except Area 1 and were able to hold elections at these training sessions. There was one change in Area Representatives – Tony Rosen will replace Roger Ankrom as one of the Representatives for Area 6 and Roger will now be an alternate. Area 1 needs to have an election, Regina has decided not to run again so they actually need 2 new Representatives.

Old Business: Steve Radcliff reported he had seen a draft of what the House Bill will look like for the proposed legislative changes we are working on. He stated it looked like both issues might be in one bill, not sure how soon to present it.

New Business: The proposed MOU revision was reviewed and discussed. George Engelbach asked why we have all the extra language and requirements. J. R. Flores stated that some of the changes have already been incorporated into the current MOU through amendments for Drug Free Workplace, Freedom of Information Act, and transportation agreement. Some of the wording changes reflect state or federal law. It was questioned why add DNR to the MOU. The response was they thought it might be more clear what everyone's role is. Colleen Meredith stated they do not intend to ask for approval at the Commission meeting tomorrow, there is no time line on the MOU. A question on page 3, fourth paragraph on the reference on collection of funds and DNR authority over collected funds. Is this just sales tax funds or all funds for a district? Colleen Meredith reminded the board that there are some laws that guide the spending of local funds. Ben Gorden stated it seems the agreement is about communication and doing the best job we can to administer the program. J. R. Flores indicated it would be good to have a timeframe of how long comments will be accepted. Question on page 5 on

geographic boundaries and sharing technical assistance. It was stated if there was sharing of district technical assistance there would be a separate MOU for the districts involved in the sharing. Question on using federal funds before state funds and why. Question on page 7 about sales from the office. What does it pertain to, what about plat books, etc.? J. R. Flores stated he would get more clarification on this. It was questioned what would happen if a district did not sign the new MOU and the response was that to remember it is not a legal binding document and everyone hoped that did not happen. The MOU does not say MASWCD or MSWCDEA are signers on it, have only been involved in the development of it. Therefore this is not something that needs approval by MASWCD. The MOU will be discussed at the Area Meetings tomorrow morning, copies (1 per district) will be available for those meetings for discussion.

Old Business continued: the Board reviewed the duties assigned to them for the conference. Reviewed the registration numbers for the conference and workshops. The Board will be doing the flag ceremony for the Opening Session. Also the agenda for the business meeting was reviewed.

New Business continued: Upcoming meetings for the Board to attend were discussed. The North Central Regional meeting in Chicago, January 5 and 6 will be attended by Steve Radcliff, Kenny Lovelace, Beverly Dometrorch and Peggy Lemons. Sandy Hutchison will also attend as the regional district employee's president. The NACD Annual Meeting in Las Vegas January 29-February 1 will be attended by Steve Radcliff, Kenny Lovelace, Beverly Dometrorch and Peggy Lemons. Bruce Biermann also expressed interest in attending and Sandy Hutchison will be attending representing the Employees Association. A motion was made by Tom Lambert, seconded by Mike Kelley to approve the attendance at these meetings. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The next Commission meeting after the Conference will be on January 11 in Jefferson City. The Education Seminar will be scheduled when it will best suit the proposed legislation.

AREA Reports: 1 – Bruce Biermann reported it had been a good fall considering all of the flooding. They are shy of contractors due to the flooding repair work being done.

2 – Tom Lambert reported it has been an exceptional fall. There was a meeting in Worth County which he felt was a good meeting, gave the opportunity to air a few of the concerns with the program.

3 – Kenny Lovelace reported it is now dry after 3 ½ years of wet weather. They are also a little short on contractors or manpower.

4 – Beverly Dometrorch reported in her area either the crops turned out better than expected or they were toast. Manpower is also an issue for contractors. She stated she is not sure if all vacant district positions in her area have been filled yet.

5 – George Engelbach reported it has been a pretty good year all in all. A lot of people have hay they are shipping to other areas. His district lost their district technician, their clerk plans to take the tech II test. They don't do enough cost-share to justify amount of money spent on administration, they are trying to work it out. They have had some issues with assistance from NRCS due to staffing changes or re-assignments.

6 – Ben Gorden reported they have had some dry weather but they have had a record year on cost-share. He feels the MOSWIMS has been beneficial. They did have an area get together for ice cream and talked about concerns. He stated he encouraged his districts to talk about their concerns instead of waiting for things to happen. His district is trying to start a work study program with the local university; he feels it will be a good opportunity. Lots of students do not understand where their food comes from or soil and water. If we don't tell our story, somebody will and it may not be what we would want to have said. Ben stated 4 of his districts have indicated they do not plan to join the Association, that is their choice. He said he told them if they wanted to be a part of what we are doing then join, if not then don't join. They are fearful of government regulation and feel things don't progress too well during controversy.

7 – Dan Greeson reported no news is good news. He is trying to keep up on the lake issues. His area has had some rain which is good, other states have been purchasing hay from his area.

8 – Mike Kelley reported they had too much rain in the spring, it slowed down during the summer. The hills seemed to have had just enough rain. There are a lot of unhappy farmers in the boot hill due to the flooding. Overall things came out a lot better than expected.

Correspondence: Steve Radcliff distributed copies of a letter from Osage County to the Commission expressing their concerns on the program management and also their displeasure with the way some things have been handled by the Association. A copy of the Commission response to the letter from Osage was also distributed.

The letter from MO Department of Ag was received asking for sponsorship of the State Fair Hay Award again for 2012. A motion was made by George Engelbach, seconded by Kenny Lovelace to approve \$50 and a plaque again this year. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Other Business: No other business.

The date for the next regular meeting will be scheduled at the Education Seminar. Motion for adjournment made by Bruce Biermann, Tom Lambert seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

Steve Radcliff, President